

THE
Last S P E E C H
A N D *James Simson*
celebrated 1872
C O N F E S S I O N

OF
Nicol Muschet of Boghal,

Who was execute in the *Grafs Market* of *Edinburgh*, the sixth Day
of *January 1721*.

Containing

A brief Narrative of his Life, His Declaration or Confession before the
Lords of Justiciary, a full Account of the Manner of the Contrivance and
Perpetration of his Crime.

Together with,

Reflections upon the preceeding Passages of his Life, declaring his Sense of
his Sin, and the LORD's gracious Way of Dealing with him, during
his Imprisonment. All written and signed by his own Hand.

Ezek: XVI. 6. *I said unto thee when thou wast in thy Blood, Live : Yea, I said
unto thee when thou wast in thy Blood, Live.*

Psal: LI. 14 *Deliver me from Bloodguiltiness, O GOD, thou GOD of my Salvation
And my Tongue shall sing aloud of thy Righteousness.*

Job XXVI. 26 *And though after my Skin, Worms destroy this Body, yet in my
Flesh shall I see GOD.*

Exactly Printed according to his subscribed Copy.

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*The Dying SPEECH of NICOL MUSCHET of Boghal, written
and signed with his own Hand in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, January 6th.
1721.*

TO leave an Ample Testimony, against the many gross and Enormous Transgressions, I have been guilty of since my Infancy, would I'm confident, swell into a whole Volume; most of which I have carryed on with a high Hand and against much Light: But that all Youth may be aware of themselves, by my Example, least by their going on in such Wicked Courses of Life, as I have done, (even before it pleased an Infinite, Deity to permit me to forsake his Divine Precepts, and trample on his holy Laws; to which Vices I was enticed by frequenting bad Company) they provoke a Holy and Just GOD to abandon and suffer them to fall into some great Sins (albeit I must acknowledge mine unparallelable) which undoubtedly, if they do, will carry them to such Disgrace and Ignominy, as I justly suffer; and that in View of the World; that I may be a Terror to others from ever entertaining such horrid and Barbarous Inclinations, as I have done; as by my following Declaration emitted to the Lords of Justiciary, will appear: I shall here only lay down a few Circumstances touching the short Tract of my Life; as follows.

I had the Blessing to be descended of Godly Parents, eminent where they lived for Piety (as I am for Impiety and Profanity, which Practices I have been mostly engaged in, since I came to *Edinburgh*, about two Years ago) who made it their Concern, fully to discharge their Duty to all their Children, but more especially to me, their only Darling. But Oh! how obstinate and Rebellious a Son have I been, Notwithstanding of the many good Admonitions and Reproofs I have got, both of my dutiful Parents, and others of GOD's People! So long as my Father lived, who was by Death taken from me ten Years since, I willingly received their good and wholsom Instruction: And also after his Death, my dutiful Mother war'd liberally on my Literature, viz. in Humanity, and what was further incumbent on her to do, for the Discharge of her Duty; but above all, she was very diligent to cause me haunt the Company of the Godly, whereto by her Perswasion, so long as I was in her Sight, I adhered: Notwithstanding, by my corrupt Inclinations, I refused to submit my self to Christ's Yoke; and thinking it a Burden for my Spirit to be under such Subjection to her, and not to be allowed Freedom, to be guilty of the many Extravagances, I saw my Comrads, and most young Men enjoy, as I thought, with Pleasure (But oh! such Pleasures, to my sad Experience, were sweet in my Mouth, but most bitter in my Bowels!) and not to appear any Way singular in the World; by Degrees I renounced that good Profession, and drew Iniquity with Cords of Vanity, and Sin as with a Cart-ropes: But seeing, while in her Company, I could not have Freedom enough openly to avow such Practices, I

resolved to go to an Employment ; And she thereto, with much Difficulty, condescending, entered me to a Surgeon, *Anno 1716*. With whom I being somewhat narrowly kept, fell into Company, which prevailed on my too pliable Temper by Degrees, tho' not without some Opposition and Reluctancy at first, to contemn GOD's Way, profane his Sabbaths, I wear, together with many other Points of Debauchry. This, alas ! was the *Beginning of Sorrows*. After I had staid sometime with my Master, mostly for his Want of Business, and partly for other Reasons, I returned to my Mother, with whom I staid for a considerable Time, resolving to stay in the Country. And a While after, by the Perswasion of some, I went to the same Chirurgeon, expecting his Business to have been better : But finding it worse, I again returned to the Country ; where I staid for some Weeks, and having got Notice of a Dissection at *Edinburgh*, two Years since, I went thither ; and after it was over, I staid for sometime in a Shop, where I did not attend so close as I ought ; but neglecting my Business, by this Time, began to be more and more enticed by Company : Albeit hitherto I did not fall into any gross Snares ; but kept Company (till immediately after my unhappy Marriage) that were civil and Moral. And when my Mother got an Account of my Conversation here, she was very careful, both when I went to see her, and also when absent from her, to let me know the Evil of such Practices ; which Advices, both by Word and Write, were so little regarded by me, that I said, *What a Weariness is it to seek the LORD ?* thinking it far better *to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin*, than subject my self to the Service of GOD. But oh ! how does the very Commemoration of my so misspending precious Time, pinch me to the very Heart ! Considering what Means and Mercies I have sinned against, not only in neglecting GOD's Divine Law ; but also in ridiculing and contemning those who professed to adhere thereto.

Albeit it may seem superfluous, to relate the Manner of my being engaged into that unlucky Marriage, whereto I was led as an Ox to the Slaughter, and as a Fool to the Correction of the Stocks : Yet to satisfy the World in each Part of this ; I will only insert a few Particulars, as my Memory serves, viz. After I had returned from seeing my Mother, sometime in *August 1719*. One Night accidentally walking to the *Castle-hil*, I saw a Maid at *Adam Hall's Door*, whom I never knew before, nor any pertaining him, the which Maid shortly before had kept a Cellar near to the Shoppe, where I staid, and she being acquaint with me, asked, If I would give her a Choppin of Ale ? Which I granted ; and when she and I had discoursed some Time, *Adam Hall's Daughter* came to us ; and the Maid said, She being thronged, behoved to leave me, but that young Lady would willingly intertain me : So after she and I had sit together a long Time, and she told me a great many Things, particularly her Amours with one *Andrew Henderson*, the Disappoint of whom, she said, was the first Rise to a Swelling in her Breast, which she lasciviously discovered, and let me see : But being wearied with such idle Discourse, I told her, I wanted Lodging (being the second Night after my coming at that Time to Town). To which, she said, I needed not haste my self away to provide a Room ; for she knew of a sufficient

sufficient one, to which she would direct me; and she promised to be no Stranger to me in it, (And truly to my sad and lamentable Loss, she made me too many Visits), Whereupon she sent a little Girl with me to the House of one *John Murray* in *Anchor-Cloft*, whose Wife was her Friend, where frequently thereafter she came on Pretence of other Relation to the Landlady; and also she brought with her one of her Comrad's, who (to my good Information afterwards) went under the Character of a lewd Woman; For at that Time, not thinking in the least of Marriage, I never enquired any Thing about them. And they so assaulted me Day and Night, that I was some Times ashamed, and some Times shunned their Company, But I was so infatuated, as not to think of altering my Quarters; notwithstanding of my being fully sensible of their Design, to impose upon me. And likewise the said *John Murray's* Wife, in their Absence, urged me as much as she could (tho' he did not so himself); and pressing me thus for some few Days (for all this Time I did not acquaint any of my being so used) they so far prevailed upon my simple, easie Temper, as to propose the Matter to her Father; which when I did, he said, His Daughter was not yet fully educate for Marriage; but if I wanted to speak to her, I might appoint at *David Hutchefon's* House, on Account, his House, being publick, was not the proper Place, and not in *William Ged's* Dyker, whither she sometimes carried me, because he said that House was under bad Report. And at his Desire, she and I met sometimes in the said *David Hutchefon's*. And on Monday the last of *August 1719*, a South Country Friend of her's got Hold of me, and pressed me very hard to marry her that same Night; which on no Terms I would do, till some of my Friends were present. Whereupon I immediately sent for *Alexander Chalmers*, Accountant in the Excise Office; and not finding him, I again sent for *Robert Wood* Keeper of the *Physick Garden*, who came, and that Night carried me off. And after that Night, I was fully resolved not to yield to any Temptation of that Kind, neither first nor last having any true Affection for her; But my Country-man *Archibald Ure*, Gold-smith, whom I had only seen once in the Tolbooth before that Time, being some Days after informed of what past; on *Saturday September 5th. 1719*, sent his Lad for me to Mr. *Gib* Chyrurgeon his Shop, and when I went to him, he carried me to one *Cunningham's*, at the Head of the *Lucken-booths*, and having called for Wine, seriously asked me, what I designed to do in that Affair. To which I replied, I had no such Design as Marriage in View, thinking to go Abroad. Then he said, I was a Child, in losing such an Opportunity; and insisted very much on her Commendation, by telling me, He had been intimately acquaint both with her Father and with her self, ever since he came to *Edinburgh*; and proposed, in Order to serve me, to go immediately alongst with me to *Adam Hall's*, and he would do all the Service he could. By which perswasive Arguments he induced me presently, to go and propose to dispatch it that Night; And if I wanted a Ring, or what his Shop could afford, I was very welcome to have it, either with, or without Money. And when he and I went to *Adam Hall's*, I again said, I was desirous to speak with the foresaid Mr. *Chalmers*, before I went further on; to which both *Archibald Ure* and

Adam Hall said, What needed I delay Time for *Mr. Chalmers* I could not get, and tho' I had him, he would not endanger his Post, by being Witnels to a clandestine Marriage: But Simplicity led me so far, that I was not capable to oppose what they said; for I did not in the least want *Mr. Chalmers* for a Witnels, but only for Advice. Then *Archibald Ure* hurried me immediately to the House of one *John Galloway*, Taylor in *Peebles Wynd*, where he left me, till he went and provided one *Mr. Robert Bowers*, who lodged near to the Head of the said Wynd, which *Mr. Bowers* the same Saturday's Night joined us together in Marriage; the Deceast's Father not a little rejoicing, and *Archibald Ure* and some others being present. By this Night's Work I was precipitate into all these miserable Misfortuns, I have been since plagued with; all which were owing to Nothing but my too much Easiness and Simplicity, thinking every Person as ingenuous as my self; and thereby I was rendered a Prey to all; for the very Time we were standing before the Curate, I was so averse, That I heartily wished Something might have stopped it. But some Days after, when I refused to take some Things, such as Ear-rings and the like, which *Archibald Ure* urged much upon me, to compliment my Spouse immediately after Marriage, he presently made me accept a Bill and make Payment of what he had advanced, by giving me Rings, and otherwise at that Time; So our sudden Acquaintance was at an End; For I very well understood, tho' too late, his Design in serving me, by pretending such Friendship, was only for Lucre's Sake; as afterwards evidently appear'd, by his making a Jest of his so far imposing upon me, as I was well informed. And after Marriage I staid with her in her Father's House till some Time in *November 1719*, Where, by her light, foolish Carriage I met daily with more and more Discontent and Provocation to leave her; and then I deserted her, with a full Resolution to go Abroad with a Comrad, who was then in going off; for which I had procured Letters of Recommendation, with whatever else I needed. And now Nothing stopped me, but my not constituting a Factor over my Fortune; and in Order thereto I condescended upon one in whom I confided, who would hardly undertake it, alledging he would be harassed by my Spouse pleading an Aliment; which Scrouple occasioned, That the Factory when written was not immediately signed: But notwithstanding of that, I could very soon have prevailed upon him, had I not met with *James Campbel*, sometime of *Burnbank*, and now Store-keeper in *Edinburgh Castle*, who diverted me intirely from that Thought, and was the only Vicegerent of the Devil, to prompt me up to be guilty of all the following Wickedness; which I greedily went on in, being so far inebriate with these wicked Principles, which by Degrees (after he understood how my natural Temper was to be prevailed upon) he instilled into me. For, till I met with him, who was the only Person, that ever tainted me with such hellish Principles, these who have been conversant with me, both when a Boy, and since my Arrival to mature Years, can declare, That I was always more ready to suffer Injuries than to be Way revengeful: Albeit I do not in the least make Use of this as an Argument, to my Guilt; but rather to magnifie it; in so far as I have allowed my

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self to be so much mastered by that Vice, viz. too much Simplicity, which, to my sad Experience is a Basis to any Kind of Wickdness. And *Burnbank* in a little Time, perfectly well understanding my Failing, daily made it his Business to assault me by Flateries, whereby afterwards, alas ! he intangled me into such gross Snares as now I suffer for: For I did not at all think such destructive Methods, as he used with me, were for my Life: tho' what I here assert of him, does not render him chargeable for my Blood; for I acknowledge the Justness of my Sentence, and my Blood to be upon my self: But stepping from Time to endless Eternity, without the least Malice against him, as GOD is my Witness, I confidently and avowedly affirm, he was the only Person ever instigate me to do Injustice to that Woman (who's Infirmities, by my Oath to God, I was obliged to conceal) and also to Debauch me many other Ways. And to put such hellish Designs, as he contrived against her, to Execution, *James Muschet*, *Pirriwig-maker* in *Edinburgh*. and *Grissel Bell* his Spouse, were mostly employed for a Piece of Money, as afterwards will appear. By this Time, on Account of my frequenting such Company as *Burnbank* and *James Muschet*, I had incurr'd the Displeasure of all those, who wished me well; and particularly of *John Findlayson*, Writer in *Stirling*, who, after he had frequently premonished me of my Danger, and found me obstinate, gave me over, as Hopeless. But *James Muschet* and his Spouse's ready Undertaking, so far scared my Conscience, that thro' the whole Course of such unheard of Wickedness, notwithstanding of my being perfectly Sensible of the Evil thereof, I never opposed, but afforded them Encouragement by Money and otherways. And the said *Grissel Bell*, when her Husband was any way Averse (as seldom he was) was very active in advising me privately to use my utmost with him to undertake several of the Plots for taking away her Life. And when that cruel Barbarity fell in my Hand; which was on *Monday October*, 17th 1720, next Morning, having told *James's* Wife of my going to *Leith*, and having given her some Money thro' a Window, which she impudently sought, as formerly she us'd to do; I went to *Leith*, and stayed all that Day in the House of one *James Lumisden* Sailor, and at Night return'd to *Edinburgh*, and sent for the said *Grissel Bell*, who came to a Close head within the Nether-bow, where I directed the Cadie to bring her; and she told me all Things were very well, and I might go to my Room, whether she and I went; and after we had got some Drink, she said, her Husband and she were determin'd to perjure themselves for my Safety. My Landlady *Katharine Foord*, Relict of *Andrew M'adam* Writer in *Edinburgh*, not being then within, who, I can in all Freedom declare, whatever she heard pass betwixt *James* and me after, never understood so much as the minutest Circumstance of any of our Designs before the Action. Then I went and tarried for some Time, in a House near to the Cross; and when I returned to my Quarters, I found my Landlady was carried to the Guard; and then I went immediately back to *Leith*, where I stayed that Night; And next Day being *Wednesday*, at Night I again came to *Edinburgh*, with the said *James Lumisden*, and

we carried my Landlady to the House of one *Mrs. Eliot* in *Flesh-Market-Clofs*, and sent for *Hugh Hay* Writer, who was intirely Innocent of all was laid to his Charge : And the Substance of what past, was only, if I thought I could stand my Tryals, it was not proper I should abscond; and if I thought not, to do what I thought best : But, on Account *James Muschet* and his Wife did not expect their Reward, because of his not doing the Action, so soon as they were examined, they magnified every Circumstance of my Guilt so far as they could; and they turned so inveterate against me, that upon the *Thursday's* Night the said *Griffel Bell* (notwithstanding of her solemn Protestations to the contrary, which I thought made me always secure from any Danger) treacherously enquired for my Quarter's in *Leith*, on Pretence of coming to me, and informing me how Matters were going; which when she got Notice of, she presently informed the Magistrates of *Edinburgh*, and went alongst with a Party of the City Guards that same Night; but they did not then find me, and I not getting Notice by this Time of her Perfidy, went that same *Thursday's* Night to her Mother's, not in the least doubting her Constancy, which they both retain'd while they were in Expectation of the 20 Guineas, of which afterwards. And next *Saturday*, she getting an Account of my being there, went as before, and informed the Magistrates, and came out with a Party about 8 o' Clock at Night, with *Andrew Jelly* her Landlord; and was so well satisfy'd with her certainty of my being there, that she not a little rejoiced in Company of the Soldiers, and all the Way she let none pass, without asking who they were, fearing my Escape : But whether her Mother had any Hand in it I cannot tell. And the Reason of my staying so long there, was; On the *Friday's* Morning I desired *William Bell* the said *Griffel's* Brother, to go to Town and bring me Word, that I might know what to do, which he promised; and at Night he came and told me, he had been with my Landlady, and, as he said, she ordered me to keep my self clost there, till she would send *Hugh Hay* to give me Directions, whereas he only desired my Landlady to go and speak to his Mother, to which *Hugh Hay* 'twas reported, I had sent a Letter, desiring him to advise my Landlady to advance me Money to carry me Abroad; which was utterly false. And as to the said *James Muschet* and his Wife their Conduct before the Action, you will find it in the following Declaration.

Being thus apprehended, I was carried to the Guard-house, and examined by three Magistrates, before whom I denied the Fact, till one of them gave me a more distinct Account of the whole Circumstances, than possibly I could do myself : Whereupon, after a little Denial, Conscience, that great Accuser would keep silent no longer; then I own'd Guilt, and sign'd my Confession : All this Time not informing any Thing against *James Muschet* nor his Wife; and so he was relieved upon Bail (having layn some Days in Prison) and after his Release, his Brother and he went to the Country and stayed till my Tryals came on, then they returned to Town, and the last Day of my Tryal, when the Witnesses were to be examined, I gave in the following Declaration, whereupon *James*, his Wife and some others were apprehended.

The Tenor of the Declaration before the Lords of Justiciary, is as follows

My LORDS,

IN Exoneration of my own Conscience, and Obedience to your Lordships Desire, I have here as briefly as I can, and the present Composure of my Thoughts allows me, given you an Account of the whole Designs and Intrigues (to the utmost of my Knowledge) were carried on or intended against that poor Woman now in Eternity : In the free Discharge of which I most humbly crave your Lordships Clemency, both in protracting the Time, and mitigating the Pains of my deserved Punishment, which I hope, after an ingenuous and free Confession, your Lordships will grant, it in such barbarous Cases Favours can be expected. And as for your Lordships making Question into what I here advance of others, I let your Lordships know I do it in all Freedom, without Malice against, or Regard for any Person, as God the supreme Judge and mine own Conscience the greatest Witness are my Vouchers. As,

Having had the Misfortune to marry that Woman in less than three Weeks Acquaintance, by the Intigation of one whom I supposed to be my Friend, and who did show, as I thought, no small Pretences thereof on the 5th of September 1719, I was no sooner returned from solemnizing Marriage but I repented; not finding Matters in any Part answer my Expectation. A little while after I proposed to leave her, and improve my self Abroad being bred a Chirurgion; and in order thereto, I went to the Country and advanced some Money, and finding my Mother and Friends not willing I should expose my self to the Dangers of Travel, I returned to Town, and notwithstanding of their Aversion, I resolved to prosecute my Design. But their being an old Plea betwixt *Burnbank* and my Father, which I was willing should be taken away before my going off. And among other Things, when I narrated to him my Misfortune, in rather choosing to leave the Country than lead my Life with a Woman, whom I had unluckily married and for whom I had no Affection; and he catching the Advantage of me here too too readily offered me his Assistance to be rid of her, *viz.* by Divorcing her. And my simplicity by his subtile Insinuations, was very soon prevailed upon; rather to enter his Measures against her (who to my good Information before any certain Knowledge after Marriage was a bad Woman, albeit God forbid I should any way make use of this as an Argument for my so using her) than to Ruin my Estate and disoblige Friends. And the Method to do it, was (*First* having entered into Obligements one to another, by my giving him Money to carry it on together with a Bill for 50 Lib. Sterling, which he got for his Labour, and by his giving me his Obligation, which is at present in *James Russel* Procurator's Custody, not to require any of the said 50 Lib. from me, till he procured sufficient Evidence against her of Adultery; which Obligements we both entered into mutual

and that in the House of Mr. *Jaffrey*, where we had stayed all that Day concerning wicked Measures against the Defunct) he made it his Business to provide one *John M'Gregory* Professor of Languages in the Canongate, who might after our Intoxicating her with Drink and *Liquid Laudanum* so that she might Sleep, go into her Bed, and then call Witnesses who were on Purpose tristed. But notwithstanding of her getting much *Laudanum* with Brandy and Sugar, which was administered by *Burnbank* and one *Alexander Pennycuik* for present in the Abbay, by Way of *Stocktown* Drops; and when any other drank they had also a Glass with *Stocktown*, to make the poor Creature believe there was no Fallacy: Which was done in one *Baillie Smith's* House in the Abbay; yet she was not so overcome, but of Necessity I behoved to Bed with her, where I stayed till she fell Asleep, and immediately when I left her sleeping, *Burnbank* called *M'Gregory* to her, who threw off his Cloaths and went into the Bed, where the Witnesses being also called by *Burnbank*, saw him make some stirring in the Bed, according to *Burnbank's* Directions: Whereupon *M'Gregory* immediately went off. After which I returned to her Room and awoke her, who all this Time was fast Asleep; and she asked, why I arose? and what these Men, viz. the Witnesses wanted, to which *Burnbank* answered, Madam, out of Kindness and Simpathy with you, I have bro't them to be Witnesses to your Husbands obliging himself both to promise to be more Affectionate, and also to settle an Aliment upon you; so that you may be easy whether he leave you or not; and so we left her. But before any Thing of this was put to Execution, immediately after my first deserting her and our concerting so to Debauch her, he caused me write a most opprobrious Letter from his Mouth; and to make it clink the better, that I was upon my Way in leaving her, we dated the Letter at *Newbottle*, of an anterior Date to our being in Mr. *Jaffrey's*, and which we sent to the decessit by one *Walter Weir* Cadie in the *Lagh* Coffee-house, to the Care of Mrs. *Thom* Mercatrix at the Bow-head; signifying to her, that on Account of her lewd and base Practices, I had been obliged to forsake her; and that Moment having taken Horse for *London*, she might never expect to see my Face more, nor have any Thing of me: Which Letter was sent to Cause her Despair of me, that she might more readily enter into Temptation, and be seduced by such as he intended to Assault her. (But oh! with what Shame and Confusion may I rehearse such barbarous Cruelties! After her receiving this Letter, she resolved to take a Trial of the Country with my Mother, supposing me quite gone (but from the Time she got the foresaid Letter, till about a Fortnight thereafter, by *Burnbank's* Direction I lurked in the foresaid *Alexander Pennycuik's*) which *Burnbank* being informed of, was very diligent before her going off to stop her, by making her believe he would find me out, and procure all reasonable Demands that she should require. But notwithstanding she went off with the Carrier, which *Burnbank* getting Notice of, hired one *Andrew Shields* Writer to pursue her, together with himself; and having obtained a Warrant from a Justice of Peace of *Linlithgow* Shire, who was I believe the Laird of *Mango-*

banks, to apprehend her on Suspicion of Theft, and having enquired at most private Houses on the Way, at last found her in *Linlithgow*, travelling all the Way under Cloud of Night, being so eager on their Pursuit; having taken Horse at the two Penny Custom-house about 11 o' Clock at Night: And when they found out her Quarters, they made as if they had not known of one another's coming; whereupon *Andrew Shiels* presented a Baton as a Constable, to incarcerate her for Theft. Upon which *Burnbank* pretended to be very concerned, that any of his Countrymen's Relations, especially such as she, should be so used; whereupon (according to their designed Plot) he bail'd her to *Edinburgh*; and when they came to Town, he settled her, being on a *Saturday's* Night, in one *Lorn's* at the Back of the Wall, where he staid all Night with her himself, and gave Orders to the Landlady to let her want for nothing, and gave her some Money. But in a few Days thereafter she went to my Mothers: And to call her hence, *Burnbank* dictated a considerable long Letter (which I suppose her Father keeps) promising many fair Things, upon which she returned and staid for some Days, in the House of *Thomas Stuart* Merchant in Grass-market, who was ordered privately to entertain her civilly, and dissuade her from going to her Father's, or have any Communication with any belonging to him; fearing his hellish Project at the Abbey should be disappointed by her conversing with any of her Friends. And on a *Munday's* Night (if I right mind) he carried her to the foresaid *Baillie Smith's* in Coach, to perpetrate the said Barbarous Design by *M'gregory*, which House of *Baillie Smith* was thought fitter for the Purpose, than either *Gilbert Yates* where we said I was to lodge or on *Herman's* in the *Abby-Hill*, where *Burnbank* said he wanted a Room for a Young Gentlewoman, both which he & I tryed on a Sabbath Day, and the foresaid *Pennycuik* was with us in *Gilbert Yates's*; all which was about the latter End of *December 1719*. But after we informed our Procurator *James Russell* of all we could do, he told us, unless we could Evidence a Tract of Conversation betwixt *M'gregory* and her, either before, or after the Fact, we could never make any thing of it: Whereupon *James Muschet* and his Wife were employed to introduce him to her, which *James* did by carrying *M'gregory* several Times to her Room at Night, and drinking with her; but when in so doing I had spent much Money, both in frequenting *Burnbank's* Company, hiring *M'gregory* by *Burnbank's* advice, and sustaining *James Muschet* and his Family, together with my Procurator's discouraging me; I turned very Remiss in following out that Resolution. And by this Time finding *Burnbank*, *M'gregory*, and *James Muschet* very indifferent unless they were daily supplied in Money, I intirely gave over that Thought. But the Devil never

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wanting

* This is the Account I had from *Burnbank* of that Particular, but since my giving in this Declaration, I find the Carrier and some others upon their Examination, have given a different Account thereof. I refer it to their Declaration in the Judges Hands, and expect that my Mistake in this (being the exact Account I had from *Burnbank*) will not invalidate what else I have here narrated.

wanting his own Emissaries, immediately after I had given over that Resolution; instigate *Burnbank* to advance a Degree further, by convincing me of the Smalness of such Wickedness, as to exhibite to her Poison; and the only proper Hand for it was *James Muschet*, who when it was proposed to him, very readily undertook it: and the way to give it her, was by mixing a sufficient Quantity of it with a Paper of Sugar, before he went to her Room, and when he went to her, to call for a Dram of Brandy with some Suggar, which so soon as it came, clandestinely to exchange the Sugar when it fell to her Dram, and after she took it, to make a pretence to break the Glais (whereby several Glasses were broken in her Quarters) lest it should do Harm to any others: but he waiting a good while before he could conveniently get it done, at last on a Sabbath Night got her to take it; which she immediately threw up, and continued for some Days thereafter very sick, by Vomiting and Purging, so that Life was not expected for her. The said *James* always making it his Business, when he went to her, to send one *Barbara Hunter* a Maid who waited upon her, to his Wife, whom we had ordered to detain the said *Barbara* by pretending some Business for her, till such Time as *James* thought convenient for him to perpetrate any of his intended Designs upon her. So soon as he had given it her, he came to my Room all trembling, and told me, By GOD she had got it now; whereupon he and I went streight to *Hugh Campbel* Son in Law to *Burnbank*, his House and not finding *Burnbank* there we carryed the said *Hugh Campbel* alongst with us to the Castle-gate, and the Porter sent a Man who brought him down; and we walked a considerable Time on the Castle-hil; and *Burnbank's* Advice was, to continue it, so that when she was rendered very ill with one Dose, another might carry her off; which accordingly was done, but not with expected Success: And by *James's* some times giving it with Sugar, she began to be suspicious, and so soon as the Sugar was brought in, she would have it her self to put into the Brandy, which was granted her: But *Burnbank*, *James*, and I contrived to put a little of the Poison in a Nutmeg-Grater, and with pretence of grating down the Nutmeg, to let the Poison fall into the Liquor; for which *James* got a Grater from *Burnbank* which afterwards he gave to *Alexander Pennycuik*, as if it had been burnt in the Fire by Reason of the *Mercury corrosive*, which *Burnbank* assured us was far less dangerous to meddle with than *Arsenick*, on Account *Arsenick* both swelled and discoloured. And also *James's* Wife took a little of it, and went with a Design to give her it in Brandy; whereupon *James's* Wife caused warm a Drink of Ale. and called for some Meal, which when she had caused her Drink, she threw the Cup into the Ashes, on a pretence of chasing away a Cat, so that she might have Occasion to wipe it. And also *James* went one Day to Mr. *Russel* Druggist his Shop, and askt a Sight of his *Corrosive Mercury*, in order to buy some of it, which when he saw exactly to agree to what he had formerly got, he took none of it, for he was afraid, I had given him *Arsenick* for it. But after *James*, his Wife and I had so dealt with her to no Purpose; *Burnbank* again proposed to Debauch her, which *James* was to do; and which he said, he could without any Difficulty perform; for which

End.

End they both went to *Gilbert Yates's*, vvhhere they were to fix on a convenient Room, and finding one for their Purpose, wherein *James* was to stay, under the Name of Mr. *Stewart* a Country Gentleman not agreeing with the Town Air; but not thinking the Landlady fit for their Purpose they went straight hence, to one *M^r Neil's* a Gardiner, where they found all Conveniences they wanted, as a proper Room for the Witnesses to carry in till *James* would give the Sign of his being in Action, but so soon as they came and told me, I opposed it. And also in *March* last, when I underwent Salivation for my Ears, *Burnbank* made it his Business to cause *James* make her believe, I was pox'd; with a Design to cause her also undergo a Course, and drink Cold Water when it were at a height, to dispatch her; which *James* obliged her to do, tho' to none Effect; and he urged her so to take *Mercury*, even to threatening her with a Knife, if she refused: But when his causing her drink Cold Water did not prevail, he again made her take more *Corrosive Mercury*, immediately after her Salivation; and *Burnbank* advised to give her it in Sack and Cinnamon, as a Cordial after her Sicknes; and when he could not prevail, by *Burnbank's* Advice, I went to her with him; (for from the Abbay Plot I had not been with her till now) and while I was speaking with her lying in Bed, being sick after some of the Poison he had given her the preceeding Day, he mixed some more of it in Liquor at our Backs, which I caused her take. And this Course we continued for some Time, but all these preceeding Projects failing, *Burnbank* advised to commit yet more Wickedness, *Viz.* (And now it's easie to conjecture, That by this Time we were intirely given up, to scruple at no Kind of Evil, by our being prevail'd upon, *James* to put to Execution, and I to condescend to, whatever Measures *Burnbank* proposed, so long as I threw them Money.) By his advising *James* to carry her to *Leith*, some Afternoon- and to drink her till it were very late, and on their Way home to drown her in a Pond; whereof *Burnbank* said he knew two on the Way, which were both on the North-side of the South Walk to *Leith*; which he and I went on a Sabbath-Day to see: but this Proposal, *James* not condescending to, said, if we thought it might do, he would, on pretence of Kindness, take her to the West-Country with him on Horse, and have her Pad so slackly tyed, that he might easily throw her off in *Kirklistoun* Water, by his checking the Horse, which he was to do after much Rain, so that the Water might be big enough to carry her off: which was mostly his Wife's Proposal; she being accessory to the very minutest Part of the whole Conduct, from first to last, and not a little contributing advice in each particular. *Burnbank*, not thinking this proper gave Advice for *James* to knock her on the Head; or dispatch her some other Way; and immediately thereafter to flee to *Paris*: Which in no Ways he would condescend to. And a While after that, *Burnbank* and I discorded so far, that we scarcely spoke together; by Reason of his keeping up my Papers; and thereby our Projects were laid aside for a While. But sometime thereafter, *James*, his Wife and I concerted to knock her on the Head when going down *Dickson's* Clofs late to her Room: Which Consert we entered in to latter End of *April*, or Beginning of *May* last: And for their Reward, I was to

gave them Twenty Guineas (which was his Reward, for his right executing any of the foreſaid Projects) For which he ſought my Bill, alledging, himſelf not ſure without it; becauſe he ſaid, *He had got one Hundred Pound more from his Brother than his Portion; ſo that he expected none from any of his Friends; and he only depended on this* (his Wife being more fond on that helliſh Deſign than him ſelf) whereof he got one Guinea in Winter, which he gave to Mr. James Ure Writer, to give to the Kirk Treafurer; and Half a Guinea to bury his Child, with 10 Shillings Sterling to turn his Cloaths, a little before the fatal Accident happened, in Part of Payment of the ſaid 20 Guineas; beſides Sufſenance for more than three Quarters of a Year to himſelf & Family. But before we did any Thing in this Project, he and I went about 10 a-Clock in the Morning, ſometime in May laſt, to Mr. Makom's in the Head of the Canongate, and ordered his Wife to follow, and not finding that Houſe convenient, ſo ſoon as we ſaw her thro' a Window, we went out, and took her to the foreſaid Mr. Jaffrey's, having her Child with her; and we were ſet in a Room immediately off the Kitching, where we deeply conjured our ſelves, never to diſcover the Plot; then ſhe and her Child went off, and he and I ſtayed ſometime thereafter; and the Meaſures we laid down, were, That his Wife was to detain the Deceaf in the ſaid James Muſchet's Room, till about 11 or 12 a-Clock at Night, by affording her Meat and Drink, and intertaining her with flattering Diſcourſe; and in the mean Time her Husband was to wait, from 10 of the Clock, at the Head of the foreſaid Cloſs, or immediately within the Nether Bow (James's Room being at the Head of St. Mary Wynd) ſo that he might not miſs her going at the particular Hour, he had appointed his Wife to keep her, from his Room to her own: But we did not know how to get an Inſtrument, to get which he went to Robert Sands Wright in Moultreeshil, to ſee if he could get any of his Hammers; and when he could not get any of them, his Wife (about Whitſunday) ſays, *I was laſt Day in Mrs. Decroe's Houſe, where I ſaw a Hammer's Head lying looſe* (which Mrs. Decroe then lived at the Head of the Canongate) And next Day ſhe went and brought it: And for a Shaft to it James and I went to the foreſaid Robert Sands, and got a Piece of Timber, which James fitted for the Head that ſame Night; and next Day, coming to my Room, ſhewed me his Hands, how ſore they had been by his handling the Knife, in fitting the Shaft for the Head: And to get the Deſign accompliſhed, he and his Wife were very careful for a good While, in obſerving all the Propoſals; always making it their Buſineſs to invite her to their Room at Night, and that no ſooner than 8 a-Clock, and keeping her as late as poſſibly his Wife could: But always when he followed her, to give her the Stroke in the dark Cloſs, ſome Body going up or down, prevented it.

And ſome Time in Harveſt laſt, when the Deſunct went to the Country, James running in Debt with his Landlord, ſaid, *He could not do any Thing till his Landlord were cleared, ſo that he might freely detain her at Night*. Whereupon I gave him two 20 Shillings Sterling Notes, where with he paid him: And ſhortly after he went to Mountraiſhal, where the Deceaf was, and deſired her to return to Town, in Order

to accomplish our Plot; but she did not come for some Time after; and so soon as she came, she was invited by them as formerly, he and his Wife always saying to me, We wish to GOD this were over, that we may settle some Way ere Winter come on: And one Time, when they were scarce of Money, having Nothing but what I gave them from Time to Time; and also I having very little desired them to give over that Thought: To which she said, *Is it reasonable, think you, so to do, when my Husband and I have waded so much Time and Pains, to accomplish that Design; and in Expectation of our Reward; now to give it over?* But the deceast wearied to stay so oft and so long in their Room: Whereupon they told me, *Unless I would meet with her there my self, it was not in their Power to keep her so late.* Which accordingly I did, the Beginning of the Week before that Barbarity happened; and kept her till about 12 at Night; and James waiting her as formerly, some Times did not see her, and some Times was prevented by the People walking the Clofs: And by our detaining her so late, for some Nights successively; their Landlord would not suffer her to stay in his House after 10 a-Clock; and James by waiting her so late for some Nights before, was seized with the Toothach; which occasioned him to keep his Room for two or three Days; in which Time we contrived to take the poor Woman to some Part in the *Canongate*, where we were not acquaint; and while I detained her, he might go to his former Post. Next Day being that fatal *Monday*, in the Morning before I went out, I had some Occasion for a Knife; but what it was I do not mind; having left my little Pocket Knife with the Deceast the preceeding Night; and so asked a Knife of my Landlady, who gave me one; and enquired what was become of mine own? I said I lost it last Night: Whereupon she desired me, it I pleased, to make Use of her's till I got mine own; which I accepted. At which Time I did not in the least think on what that Night happened; and far less my Landlady, who thro' the whole Course of all our hellish Contrivances, never so much as knew the least Whisper of the minutest Part of them, so far as my Knowledge serves; which as on the Confines of Eternity, I attest for Truth: On Account all our Designs were carried on so secretly, that none knew any Thing of them, but our selves; viz. *Burnbank, James Muscher, his Wife and my self.* And that *Monday* after Dinner, James and I went down to *Canongate*, and meeting with some Company, diverted our selves till about 7 a-Clock; then he went to carry her to the *Canongate* according to our Proposal, that I might detain her till he would wait her as formerly, in the foresaid Clofs with the Hammer; not in the least all this Time thinking on what happened: And when he returned to me (who stayed all the Time he went for her, in the House of one *Teman* Gunsmith at the Head of the *Canongate*) without any Expectation of her coming, he and I went to a back Room, and were very angry that she did not come: Then he said to me, *Be not angry; we will send a Cadie for her.* Which immediately we did; and when she came to us, we carried her straight to Mr. Loyd's; where after we had stayed a good While, James went off, and I gave him his Directions as formerly, at Mr. Loyd's Stair-foot, which accordingly he went to execute. But (Oh! that my Head were

give them Twenty Guineas (which was his Reward, for his right executing any of the foresaid Projects.) For which he sought my Bill, alledging, himself not sure without it; because he said, *He had got one Hundred Pound more from his Brother than his Portion; so that he expected none from any of his Friends; and he only depended on this* (his Wife being more fond on that hellish Design than him self) whereof he got one Guinea in Winter, which he gave to Mr. James Ure Writer, to give to the Kirk Treasurer; and Half a Guinea to bury his Child, with 10 Shillings Sterling to turn his Cloaths, a little before the fatal Accident happened, in Part of Payment of the said 20 Guineas; besides Sustainance for more than three Quarters of a Year to himself & Family. But before we did any Thing in this Project, he and I went about 10 a-Clock in the Morning, sometime in May last, to Mr. Makom's in the Head of the Canongate, and ordered his Wife to follow, and not finding that House convenient, so soon as we saw her thro' a Window, we went out, and took her to the foresaid Mr. Jaffrey's, having her Child with her; and we were set in a Room immediately off the Kitching, where we deeply conjured our selves, never to discover the Plot; then she and her Child went off, and he and I stayed sometime thereafter; and the Measures we laid down, were, That his Wife was to detain the Deceast in the said James Muschet's Room, till about 11 or 12 a-Clock at Night, by affording her Meat and Drink, and intertaining her with flattering Discourse; and in the mean Time her Husband was to wait, from 10 of the Clock, at the Head of the foresaid Clofs, or immediately within the Nether Bow (James's Room being at the Head of St. Mary Wynd) so that he might not miss her going at the particular Hour, he had appointed his Wife to keep her, from his Room to her own: But we did not know how to get an Instrument, to get which he went to Robert Sands Wright in Moultreesbil, to see if he could get any of his Hammers; and when he could not get any of them, his Wife (about Whitsunday) says, *I was last Day in Mrs. Decroe's House, where I saw a Hammer's Head lying loose* (which Mrs. Decroe then lived at the Head of the Canongate) And next Day she went and brought it: And for a Shaft to it James and I went to the foresaid Robert Sands, and got a Piece of Timber, which James fitted for the Head that same Night; and next Day, coming to my Room, shewed me his Hands, how sore they had been by his handling the Knife, in fitting the Shaft for the Head: And to get the Design accomplished, he and his Wife were very careful for a good While, in observing all the Proposals; always making it their Business to invite her to their Room at Night, and that no sooner than 8 a-Clock, and keeping her as late as possibly his Wife could: But always when he followed her, to give her the Stroke in the dark Clofs, some Body going up or down, prevented it.

And some Time in Harvest last, when the Defunct went to the Country, James running in Debt with his Landlord, said, *He could not do any Thing till his Landlord were cleared, so that he might freely detain her at Night.* Whereupon I gave him two 20 Shillings Sterling Notes, where with he paid him: And shortly after he went to Mountathol, where the Deceast was, and desired her to return to Town, in Order

to accomplish our Plot; but she did not come for some Time after; and so soon as she came, she was invited by them as formerly, he and his Wife always saying to me, We wish to GOD this were over, that we may settle some Way ere Winter come on: And one Time, when they were scarce of Money, having Nothing but what I gave them from Time to Time; and also I having very little desired them to give over that Thought: To which she said, *Is it reasonable, think you, so to do, when my Husband and I have wared so much Time and Pains, to accomplish that Design; and in Expectation of our Reward; how to give it over?* But the deceast wearied to stay so oft and so long in their Room: Whereupon they told me, *Unless I would meet with her there my self, it was not in their Power to keep her so late.* Which accordingly I did, the Beginning of the Week before that Barbarity happened; and kept her till about 12 at Night; and James waiting her as formerly, some Times did not see her, and some Times was prevented by the People walking the Clofs: And by our detaining her so late, for some Nights successively; their Landlord would not suffer her to stay in his House after 10 a-Clock; and James by waiting her so late for some Nights before, was seized with the Toothach; which occasioned him to keep his Room for two or three Days; in which Time we contrived to take the poor Woman to some Part in the *Canongate*, where we were not acquaint; and while I detained her, he might go to his former Post. Next Day being that fatal *Monday*, in the Morning before I went out, I had some Occasion for a Knife; but what it was I do not mind; having left my little Pocket Knife with the Deceast the preceeding Night; and so asked a Knife of my Landlady, who gave me one; and enquired what was become of mine own? I said I lost it last Night: Whereupon she desired me, if I pleased, to make Use of her's till I got mine own; which I accepted. At which Time I did not in the least think on what that Night happened; and far less my Landlady, who thro' the whole Course of all our hellish Contrivances, never so much as knew the least Whisper of the minutest Part of them, so far as my Knowledge serves; which as on the Confines of Eternity, I attest for Truth: On Account all our Designs were carried on so secretly, that none knew any Thing of them, but our selves; viz. *Burnbank, James Muscher, his Wife and my self.* And that *Monday* after Dinner, James and I went down to *Canongate*, and meeting with some Company, diverted our selves till about 7 a-Clock; then he went to carry her to the *Canongate* according to our Proposal, that I might detain her till he would wait her as formerly, in the foresaid Clofs with the Hammer; not in the least all this Time thinking on what happened: And when he returned to me (who stayed all the Time he went for her, in the House of one *Teman Gunsmith* at the Head of the *Canongate*) without any Expectation of her coming, he and I went to a back Room, and were very angry that she did not come: Then he said to me, *Be not angry; we will send a Cadie for her.* Which immediately we did; and when she came to us, we carried her straight to Mr. *Loyd's*; where after we had stayed a good While, James went off, and I gave him his Directions as formerly, at Mr. *Loyd's* Stair-foot, which accordingly he went to execute. But (*Oh! that my Head were*

Waters, and mine Eyes, a Fountain of Tears, that I might weep Day and Night, in calling to mind such barbarous Cruelty!) When she and I had stayed a good Time after him; the Devil that cunning Adversary suggested to me, being now hardened and also desperate, by all the foresaid Plots failing, That it was but a light Thing, whether he or I were the Executioner: Whereupon I yielding to the Temptation, did as my Indictment bears: And when I returned, thinking *James Muschet* and his Wife would as soon inform of themselves as of me, I called first at their Door, and when they came, I told them what I had been at; but what they answered, I do not mind: And *James* went alongst with me to my Room: But what my Deportment was, or what Words past (my Thoughts being so distracted after such Wickedness) I have intirely forgot.

Because in this preceeding Declaration, I have given a particular Narration of all the Circumstances leading to the last and most horrid Act of this bloody Tragedy; wherein others by Advice and Assistance concurred with me: But have rather couched, than particularly narrated the barbarous and unnatural Murther it self; wherein I alone was the Executioner: Therefore, to satisfy the World as to my Impartiality, and to glorify God by taking Shame to my self; I shall particularly lay open that black Scheme of monstrous Cruelty with the utmost Ingenuity, so far as the Perturbation of my Mind amazed upon every Remembrance of such unparalleled Guilt will allow, which take as follows. First, When she and I went out of *Mr. Lloyd's House* I desired her to go down the Cannongate with me, and when she asked on what Account, I bad her ask no Questions but go alongst with me; and when we went the Length of the Abbay, she asked, whether I was going? I said, She was not concerned to know, but only she behoved to go with me: And when we were going through *St. Ann's Yards* she weep'd (oh! how does my Heart bleed to think upon it!) and prayed, that God might forgive me, if I was taking her to any Mischief; and she desired to return, then I swore by all that's good, if she would return I was not to stop her; but I was going to *Duddingstoun*, and if she would not go with me, she needed never expect to exchange one Word with me afterwards: And so we went on, she all the Way entreating me to return; which I would not yield unto: For now the Devil had got so fast hold of me, being permitted to tempt me to the Perpetration of such cruel Wickedness, that he would not let me go; albeit my Convictions were frequently upon the Way very strong, so that sometimes when she was not speaking, I heartily wish'd she might return; but whenever she spake, my rebellious obstinate Heart being so far tempted by Satan would not suffer her. (O! that I may be helped suitably to take Shame to my self and give Glory to God!) And when we entered the Duke's Walk, she said, *That that was not the Way to Duddingstoun*. To which I said, I would lead her another Way than the Road thro' the middle of the Park; to which she submitted. And when we came to the fatal Place, which was near to the east End of the said Walk, (Oh! unspeakable Cruelty!) how I got her down to the Ground I do not distinctly mind; but so far as I mind, it was on pretence

preference of embracing her; then I presented the Knife, which when she saw me
 offer to apply to her Throat she cryed out, *And was that your Design in bringing
 me here, to cut my Throat?* To which I said, I had brought her there, to punish
 her for her so far cheating me and playing the Whore by me: Then she very earnestly
 obtested me, for God's Sake to desist; and what she had done amiss before, she
 would never be guilty of the like in Time coming: But notwithstanding of her
 Arguments, which would have pierced the most savage Heart, I went on, and de-
 signing the Knife for her Throat, when she bow'd down her Head for Defence I
 cut her Chin to the Bone; and when she got hold of the Knife I so furiously drew
 it thro' her Hand, that as I was afterwards informed, her Thumb was almost cut
 off: Whereupon she cry'd out, *My Love, my Love, do not Murder me!* as long as
 she was able: Which doleful Cries, with my seeing the Blood gushing down,
 so smote my Heart, that if I could, I would have given the whole World, to have
 got it undone: But the cruel Murderer of Souls suggested to me, that if I shou'd
 then give over since I began, it would take away my own Life by her telling: So
 with much struggling, by my dragging and throwing her down by the Hair of her
 Head (which if she had wanted, I'm confident I had not got her overcome) not-
 withstanding of her very earnest and affectionate Entreaties which she used so long
 as she was able, I maliciously went on till I got some Strokes upon her Throat:
 Then she said, *Oh Man! it's done now you, need not give me more;* and then her Head
 fell down and she expired. And after she had layen some Time dead, I yet fearing
 she might recover (Oh! dreadful to mention!) cut her Throat almost through and
 so left her: And when I came near to the Tirkicè at the Entry of the Duke's
 Walk from St. Ann's Yards, I was so brutally mad (as I was all the Time) that
 I returned to see what Case she was in: And when I found no Life in her, I went
 to James Muschet, and from his Room to mine own as above: And being in such
 Condition, I have entirely forgot how I did, or what I said: And I do not in the
 least doubt but I did boast of the horrid Wickedness. And woe's me! that I con-
 tinued so hardened, not only in the Time, by my refusing to hear her pitiful Cries
 & Groans (which Cries & Groans have now a loud Voice in my Ears:) But also after
 the Perpetration, to approve of such cruel Barbarity, by my boasting thereof. This
 to the utmost of my Memory, is the nearest Account I can give of that cruel and in-
 humane Murder.

Having thus briefly run over the Tract of my short Life, and shown by what Steps
 I have been led into a Course of Life, which in the just Judgment of God, has
 brought me to suffer this deserved Punishment, altho' I may already seem to have ex-
 ceeded the just Limits of a dying Speech (which Prolixity has been occasioned by
 my being obliged to narrate so many Circumstances of that hellish Contrivance, that
 the World may be satisfied that I am not bringing others into a Partnership in my
 Crime vvithout just Cause) yet I cannot put a Period to it, till I have made some
 few Reflections upon the foregoing Passages; and shown the World vvhat are now

my dying Thoughts of all those wicked Practices I so greedily pursued before to my own Destruction.

Oh! How shall I bemoan my self in Consideration of my so frequently opposing and contemning the good Admonitions so oft enjoin'd upon me, both by my dutiful Parents, and others my Teachers! *How oft have I turned aside like a deceitful Bow, and turned a deaf Ear to the many Reproofs I have got?* All young People, O! be very careful to Remember your Creator in the Days of your Youth, while the evil Days come not, nor the Years draw nigh when ye shall say we have no Pleasure in them. Alas! how dreadful and destructive to my immortal Soul do the Wicked Courses I so much delighted in, the few Days I have lived in this sinful World, now present themselves to my View? How oft have I thought that I could never get my self satiate with Wickedness? Not in the least laying to Heart, that in a few Days the Thread of my natural Life would be cut; and I brought to Judgment. O! What Pleasure have I taken in profaning God's holy Sabbaths, by Walking, talking idle Discourse, reading Plays, Romances or the like; which precious Time the Lord hath devoted entirely to his own Worship, and commanded us not to think our own Thoughts, speak our own Words, nor do our own Pleasure? How lamentably do I regrave my not acquainting my self with the sacred Scriptures of Truth, the Word of God; the frequent reading of which, accompanied with his Spirit, is the only Way to attain everlasting Happiness? O! that all Persons would betake themselves to the serious Study of these holy Writings, and make them their only Rule: So that they may not be deserted of a holy God, to fall into such gross sinners as now bring me to an untimely and violent End. Alas! How do I shiver to think how I was first engaged in Company, whose bad Example, together with my own corrupt Inclinations, prevailed with me, to reckon it a small Thing to be guilty of getting my self frequently drunk (which is the inlet to the greatest of Vices, as in the Example of Lot, &c.) whereby I was brought that Length, as to take God's holy Name in vain, and to be guilty of a great many other vicious Practices, which the Heat of Youth, by the Spate of natural Corruption, is too apt to fall into; particularly frequent Acts of Uncleaness (whereunto I was led, especially by the vicious Company of *Burnbank*) and this, next to the bloody Crime for which I die, lyes most heavily on my Conscience; not only because such unclean Lusts, especially when habitual, are most provoking to a holy God, and quench his blessed Spirit, yea Besot a Man, and put out the very Light of Reason: But also because herein I sinned against the Remedy which God has appointed for the preventing of unlawful Lusts, and against my Marriage Oath, it being done in the State of Wedlock: For before my Marriage I was never guilty of such Practices. How may I reflect upon my neglect of Prayer; wherein, in my Way of thinking now, lyes the Life of Christianity? Which, when a Boy, I behoved to perform, both by the Example, and also by the Command of my parents, tho' against my corrupt natural Inclination; which is the only bad Spring from which all these bitter Streams do flow; and till this Fountain be stopped, the

Screams

Streams are still in Force. And I no sooner began to give over this great Duty, than I presently went on from Evil to worse; and that without Control, delighting much more in Wickedness, than those who had not that Length of Education. Oh! how burthensome did I reckon this Duty? How often have I got away to my carnal Diversion and neglected it, while in such Company as strove to put me to it? How joyful was I when I betook my self to those, who made no such Study their Concern, tho' even at first engaging with such, I cannot say, but I felt some Bitterness in going on in such Courses, so far contrary to the Practice of those I had been formerly with: But these Challenges, by my not taking Care to nourish them, were soon stifled. But to be a little more particular;

As to my Behaviour in my younger Years, before I came to the University, (But oh! what Shame may I take to my self to relate, that so much Care was taken of me, as that I was sent to a University, or that I was endued with Capacity to conceive Letters; considering how bad Improvement I have made thereof!) my Mother, on whose Spirit I was always weighty, and whom by my Indifferency in performing Religious Duties, I much grieved, was very careful, to have me trained up in the true Presbyterian Principles of Religion, in joining me with the Godly in Religious Duties, which Principles I professed and adhered to, tho', like Pharaoh's Chariots, I drove very heavily and more to obtemperate my Mother (my pious Father leaving me before I went well to the Grammar School) than from any Principle of Religion; till I came from the University: And by this Carelessness, I never made it my Business, to make Conscience of such great and necessary Duties as secret Prayer, reading the Holy Scriptures, observing the Lord's Day, &c. And thus I continued, till I went to my Employment *Anno 1716*, to one *Thomas Nafier* Chyrurgion in *Alloway*, where I began gradually to shake off any small Impressions of, and Tenderness to such Things, as I formerly had by the Example of my Mother, and of such whose Company she made me entertain: Thinking such great and weighty Matters (alas! now for my Neglect!) but Things of meanest Moment, and what would not subject my self any Way to: So that I then began to play the Prodigal, in going far astray from such Religious Education as my Parents, particularly my Mother, diligently strove to implant in me; (tho' my Heart still said, *I would have none of Christ, neither desired I the Knowledge of his Ways*: O that I, who with the Prodigal have long been feeding deliciously on the swinish Husks of sinful and brutish Pleasures, might at last arrive at the Prodigal's Resolution, out of a Sense of my utter Penury and absolute Necessity, to go and return to my Father's House, casting my self down and acknowledging that I have deeply sinned against Heaven, and in his sight: Which if I were enabled to do in good Earnest, I might undoubtedly expect such favourable Reception as he got: For the Lord's Hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his Ear heavy, that it can not hear. And this Employment and Company I chose, without ever consulting God, or eyeing his Glory; and that not so much for procuring my self a handsome Way of living, as to gratify my Lusts, in having more Freedom thereby, for going on in wicked Courses. But it pleased a holy God to oppose all my Designs; because not intended for his Glory: Which Endeavours if virtuously designed, were very lawful. And then, without any mature Consideration, I deserted the Societies I had formerly been joined with; not in the least examining the Differences betwixt these Societies and what I embraced; but only with Views to have more Opportunity for Licentiousness, despising to be one of these despicable ones whom the World knows not.

As to my misfortunate Marriage, I most heartily acknowledge GOD's Divine Hand in it, by permitting me (on Account of my so much undervaluing that *One Thing needful*, and not only undervaluing it but greedily going on in the contrary Practices, such as Drinking, Swearing, Sabbath-breaking, &c.) to be so far deprived even of my natural Senses, as to foolishly to court, upon so small Acquaintance, a Person of whose Piety and Vertue I had so few Proofs; and that without so much as in the least consulting, or informing my Mother (whom in Duty I ought to have regarded) and other Friends, who might have advised me well; but especially without my eyeing and asking Counsel of the LORD; that the Match might be for his Glory. And how do I regrave my disorderly Method of

ing in it; contrary to the Order and Decency, which Christ has appointed in his Church, and the good Lavvs of Men have established: And my celebrating it with such a Man, and in such a Manner, as corroborated and approved of the sinfull Superstitions of the Church of *England*, contrary to my Baptismal and National Vovvs, and I must acknowledge to the Light of my Conscience also. I hear it is reported, That our so sudden Marriage vvas occasioned by her Father's getting us together in Bed before Marriage; vvhich is altogether false: For in the Sight of GOD, I do declare, till after I vvas married upon her, I never knew whether she was Man or Woman. And I heartily wish That GOD vould give me a true Sight of my great Sins, in being so far undutiful, as upon my Disgust at her after Marriage, my giving such Place to that malicious Spirit to carry me so far as for her infirmities, to resolve to desert her, before I used proper Means to reclaim her: My Design in depriving her of a Livelihood, upon my resolved going Abroad: My despising of her Love, and making Ute of that as a Stratagem, to ensnare her: My hearkening so greedily to the subtile Insinuations of that wicked Wretch *Burnbank*, first to debauch and abuse her Chastity, and next, by egregious Injustice, to obtain a Divorce against her; my entring into, and concocting so long that Hellish Project; and endeavouring so eagerly and maliciously to take her off by Poison: My not observing the Divine Hand counterplotting all my Attempts of that Kind; but going on to other Bloody Devices: My delighting in the Company, and following the Courses of, and spending what GOD had given me, in supporting these wicked and Debauched Persons, *Burnbank*, *James Muschet* and his Wife, who promoted me to, and served me in this hateful Project, and gratifying others of my lusts: My giving my self to Idleness, and not attending on these Honest Studies which I was endued with Capacity to attain, and which might have made me an useful Member of Human Society, and furnished my self with an Honest and comfortable way of Living. my choosing to lodge in such Houses, where I might have had a Check upon my loose and licentious Practices, but every Thing suited to my corrupt Inclinations; rather than those, in which I might have had Examples of, and Instigations to Godliness and Sobriety: Tho' as to what the World pleases to lay to my Charge with Mrs. *Madam*; I solemnly declare as One upon the Confines of Eternity, both before GOD and Man; that I am intirely Innocent of such Imputations as they advance, by affirming me to have carnal Knowledge of her; and I earnestly desire, that God, who knows the Secrets of all Hearts, whom I call to Witnels in this, may freely forgive the Raisers of such Aspersions; as I frankly do.

As to the Crime for which I die, I deeply acknowledge, and unfeignedly bewail it: But O! who can sufficiently declare it's horrid Guilt and dreadful amazing Circumstances, which cloath it with the most astonishing and unparalleled Aggravations! My Heart fails me, to think of them; when I Remember and consider, How exceeding, atrocious, and hainous the Crime is in it self; how contrary to the Express Letter of GOD's Law; yea, to the very Light of Nature, and Convictions of my own Conscience: How extremely opposite to the Law of Love; as being done to my own Spouse, my own self; to whom I was under the strictest Bonds of Nature, and Vovvs to GOD to defend her from all harm: to the Certain Destruction of her Temporal Life, and probable Ruin of her immortal Soul, the Time to prepare for Death, to pray for Pardon, and to Repent of Sin. There is

also a Circumstance before the Perpetration of the Murder (which tho' it came late to my Memory has very much afflicted my Conscience as being a Deep Aggravation of my Guilt upon Sabbath was Eight Days before that Fatal Act, I was in the *Canongate* Church hearing Sermon, where the Minister preaching upon the Sixth Commandment did in a very pathetic Manner display the exceeding Sinfulness of, shedding Innocent Blood : and after Sermons a Gentleman in whose Seat I then sat invited me to Mr. *Lord's* House, in which I had never been before that Time, which was the very House we carried her to before, I perpetrated the Horrid Wickedness ; which Concurrence of Circumstances, tho' then not regarded by me, now plainly convinces me, that in the Righteous Judgement of GOD, these very Means which tend to the deterring of others from Sin, had the quite Contrary Effect on me.

Yea, how much Shame may I take to my self in reflecting upon my Sin and Folly, after I was apprehended, in not being duly affected with the Hainousness of my Guilt, so highly aggravate in each Circumstance ; that (as it has now pleased a Merciful GOD to discover to me the horrible Nature of it, in it's lively Colours, as such) the least Link in that Chain of Wickedness, is enough not only to condemn me, in the Sight of GOD, thro' all Eternity ; but also justly to Sentence me before Me. How ought I to be deeply humbled under the Sense of my unsuitable Apprehensions thereof ; by hardening my self under the Guilt, and denying Fact, at first, before the Judges ; using all Methods I could, to elude the just Sentence of Law, vainly to flatter my self with hopes of protracting my Sinful and Vicious Life, whereby I was so far from being any Way rightly concerned, that I approved of my hateful Courses, by adding lying and Dissimulation to all my other Sins. But it seemed good in the Eyes of a just GOD, to restrain any of the Advocates from pleading in my Behalf, in order to deprive me of any Vain Hopes, I could intertain, of Escape. But O ! that the SAVIOUR exalted, who is that Advocate at the Father's Right Hand, might undertake for me !

Now, going off the Stage of Time, as I expect and hope for Mercy and Pardon at the Hand of GOD thro' Christ ; I heartily crave and ask Pardon and Forgiveness of any Person, of whatever Rank and Station, I have any Manner of Way injured, or prejudg'd. And altho' I have already sent for *Adam Hall* that I might have Opportunity of acknowledging my Offence to him and intreating for Forgiveness from, and Reconciliation with him ; where to also he was pleased to condescend ; yet, on this Occasion, I think, I am bound in Duty, in a singular Manner, solemnly to acknowledge the Egregious Offence I have done him, whom I ought to have Reverenced as a Parent ; and lov'd his Daughter, my Spouse, in concealing her Infirmities, &c. and not violently to have destroyed her Body, probably to the Ruin of her Soul : for which Offence I humbly beg his Reconciliation, and ask his Pardon, and prays that GOD may bless this sad Dispensation to us both. And also, as I believe JESUS CHRIST is a Prince and a Saviour, exalted to give Repentance and Remission of Sins ; so he has enabled me freely and frankly to forgive (so far as the Offence tends to my Disadvantage) all Offences done to me either by *Archibald Ure*, who so precipitantly carried me on to such an unlucky Marriage, or *Burnbank*, *James Muschet* or his Wife, who were the only Instigators and Ring-leaders to my Commission of such horrid Wickedness : Or whatever Aspersions were raised in affirming both in Town and Country, that I was much given, since I came to Prison, to Drunkenness ; and that I made long Attempts violently to take away my own Life by Poison, and otherways (which were most sad Imputations) or whatever Prejudices were entertain'd by any other against me : As I expect Forgiveness of God by Christ, so I freely pardon all such, and heartily wish, that God in his due Time may discover to them their Error in so doing. I do also most cordially acknowledge the Justice of my Sentence, and am unfeignedly sensible of the Lenity of my Judges, both in protracting my Time of Preparation for Death, and in mitigating the Pains, which so Atrocious and Heinous Crime might have deserved.

As to my pious and affectionate Mother, whom I have by mine Extravagancies so often offended and now by this fatal Catastrophe of all, done what in me lyes to bring her Gray Hairs with sorrow to the Grave, I do most humbly crave her Pardon for all my Disobediences, and Offences ; in embracing her pious and wholesome Admonitions ; and I pray that she may be supported and comforted of the Lord under this sad and afflictive Providence ; and that the rest of her Children, warned by my Example, may be enabled by him so to walk soberly, righteously and godly, as they may prove a Comfort and Staff to her old Age, and relieve, in some Measure, the Loss she has sustain'd in me.

alas! How may I regrave my not acquainting my self with the Things of God in my younger days! when so much Care was taken of me both for my attaining the Speculative Part thereof; and for my putting in Practice such Things as I was taught: But, by the Corruption of my Nature, willingly yielding to the cunning Devices of that subtle Adversary the Devil; who makes it always my earnest Business, to suppress any suitable Impressions of Godliness, may arise in a poor Thing's heart, and divert them from the Thoughts of such weighty Matters, by making a deluded Creature believe, that such great Things as Religion are Trifflies, and what none but insignificant Persons, and such as are contemptible in the World will give themselves the Trouble to Notice; and so, by casting wretched Sinners into Indifferency, by Degrees brings them to doubt of the Fundamentals of Religion; and thereby leads them on from Evil to Worse, till generally they come to that Pitch, as to doubt of, or even deny the Existence of a Deity, a future Being, and all the great and weighty points of revealed Religion; and so, by the Assent of the wicked Heart, are led Captive at his pleasure (which alas! has been my Case) and upon their imbibing such hellish, Soul-destructive Principles, it is simply impossible (unless powerfully wrought upon by the Divine Hand) that ever a such can come to the right Sense of their former Courses of Rebellion. There is also another Snare, whereby that cunning Adversary entangles unwary and deluded Souls, namely, Nourishing false Hopes of Believing and Repenting on a Death-bed, which I may say to my sad Experience: Oh! with what bitter Lamentation do I now call to mind, the sad and dreadful Methods I used (when delighting myself in Wickedness) to suppress Convictions, when any Way like to awaken, by my atheistically maintaining such Thoughts, as that by the Course of Nature, I would be allowed some Time on Death-bed: Wherein (relying intirely on my own Strength) alas! I thought to do all the Work in a short time before Death: For I imagined, There was no such Difficulty in attaining saving Faith and Repentance unto Life, as now I find, and so I maliciously went on in many Soul destructive Courses: And for my Encouragement so to do, I wrested that Place of Scripture, concerning *Manassah*, with many other Instances, wherein are held forth the Riches of Free Grace and Mercy, extended to great Sinners: But it has pleased a just GOD, to deprive me of a Bed of Sickness, and bring me to thir Circumstances, which seem melancholly to the World, that I may undergo Punishment at Man's Hand, according to my Desert: And yet (tho' my Time be determined by Men) he hath thought fit, for my Humiliation to keep me in the Spirit of Bondage to Fear. O! that he would loose my Bands, and signal get himself Honour by my Death, as I have eminently dishonoured him in my Life.

I now begin to see my self utterly lost and undone in *Adam*, as a publick Person, undertaking for his Posterity, by his Breach of the Covenant of Works, and thereby involving me with others to an Abyss of Sin and Misery: For by one Man Sin entered into the World, and Death by Sin: But blessed be GOD, that he has now discovered to me (only since Sentence of Death past upon me) my utter Inability to save, or relieve my self out of this Thralldom and Misery, whereinto by Nature I am engaged; and which deserves eternal Damnation, tho' never backed by actual Transgressions. And now, what shall a poor Sinner do, when he sees himself lying under the just Sentence of eternal Death, not only on Account of Original Guilt, but also by Reason of the many Actual Sins he has committed, perhaps against many Means and Mercies, falling into gross Out-breakings (as in my sad and deplorable Case) when he sees his Sins before him, the Justice of GOD behind pursuing hard, and Corruption on every Side, and no Way to escape? By this Time GOD must work Miracles, and set himself Honour upon our Sins and Corruptions, in blotting them out of the Book of his Remembrance, and casting them into the Depths of the Sea of Forgetfulness; and that by his infinite free Love and rich Grace, whereby *He so loved the World, as to send his only begotten SON to be the Propitiation for our Sins*. O! how ought we to give Glory to the Father, for contriving such a noble Device of Salvation, to be accomplished by giving his own Son to the Death for Sinners! And how ought we to ascribe everlasting Honour to the Son, in purchasing at so dear a Rate, our Reconciliation to GOD, who otherwise were past all Hope of Recovery! O most admirable Condescension, that ever GOD equal with the Father should have stooped so low, as to undertake humane Nature; and that who knew no Sin, should become a Sacrifice for Sin! Now since the most guilty Sinner is invited, that without Money and without Price, shaking off his own rotten Rags, and putting on the Righteousness of Christ by Faith, to partake of that purchased Redemption, so freely offered to every one

faith Christ, *that ye might have Life*) I say, since we are so freely invited; How shall I, whose Sins are of a Crimson Dy, think to escape, if I neglect so great Salvation? But blessed be GOD, who has now enabled me to acknowledge his unspeakable Goodness to me, in sparing me so long, not taking me away by an immediate Stroke of his Justice, and throwing me into Hell in the very Acts of my Rebellion; and in this Dispensation to bring me to a more serious and thorough Review of my sad Condition by Nature, and by innumerable actual Transgressions; his catching me (*Manasseh-like*) in the Thicket of Affliction, opening my Heart to repent, believe his Mercy and expect Remission of Sins thro' Jesus Christ, whom I have with all my Soul and Heart endeavoured to embrace, and submit myself unto as my Prophet, Priest and King, to enlighten my Darkness, wash away my Guilt, and subdue my rebellious Will to an intire unreserved Subjection to the holy and righteous Will of GOD: And blessed for ever be his glorious Name, who has given me an Heart to accept willingly of the Punishment of my Sin, and to acknowledge his Justice and Sovereignty; yea, his infinitely good and wise Dispensation in bringing me into this Affliction. What shall I say of GOD's free Grace and Mercy! O! that GOD would enlarge my Heart, and open my closed Lips, to publish to all Creatures how far the LGRD has manifested the Riches thereof to my poor Soul, which was sunk in an Abyss of Misery, without ever Hope of Recovery; till it pleased the powerful One, to manifest himself to be such an one as he is, in redeeming me out of the Jaws of Hell; into which I had immerged my self eternally, had not GOD, thro' Christ, plucked me as a Brand out of the Fire; in opening the Prison Doors, and setting me at liberty from the Bondage of Satan, whose Captive I have too long been. What Matter of Admiration is it, that ever a holy and just GOD should have cast his Eye in Mercy upon me, the chief of Sinners, who have made it my Business to delight my self in the Works of Darkness, most Part of my short Life! But very oft, of the rudest Peices of Clay, that most excellent Potter makes Vessels of Honour, the more to manifest his singular Power and Art: For as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so are his Ways higher than our Ways, and his Thoughts than our Thoughts. Well may I say, *His Mercies are above all his other Works*. O to have suitable Apprehensions of his great mercie, in not cutting me off in the very Perpetration of some of my horrid Crimes! (which have been very many) but in lengthning out my Time, to wait to be gracious, and to Work wonderfully in his wise Providence upon my Soul; in Redeeming, Regenerating, justifying, Sanctifying and giving me the Hope of Eternal Life thro' Jesus Christ! What is Man, whose Breath is in his Nostrils, that the GOD of Heaven, whom Myriads of Angels do serve, should ever have condescended so far as to take Notice of him, who so rebelliously forsook his Maker, and brake the Covenant! And not only did he condescend to take Notice of him, but in such a Manner, as: When he was cast out in the open Field, to the loathing of his Person; to say unto him, when he was in his Blood, Live; yea, to say to him, when he was in his Blood, Live:

Now in the Faith and Hope of what I have said (and I heartily wish, That GOD may make Use of it, as a Mean to prevail with both Old and Young; but especially those of the younger Sort, whose unbridled Passion and youthful Lusts very oft hurry them into gross Snares, as in my recent deplorable Instance, to forsake their evil Ways and their unrighteous Thoughts, and to return to the LORD, and he will have Mercy upon them, and to our GOD, for he will abundantly pardon; which is the earnest Desire of my Soul, they may do, so that they may be justified by the Blood of Christ, and screened under the Cover of his Wings, in that Day when the LORD ariseth to shake terribly the Earth, in that great Day, when the fearful and unbelieving, &c. shall call to the Hills and to the Mountains to fall upon them and cover them for Fear of the LORD, and for the Glory of his Majesty; and who shall have their Part in the Lake of Fire and Brimstone) I say, In the Faith of what I have said, I willingly and cheerfully commend my Spirit to him who gave it, who is One in Three and Three in One: For Dust we are, and to Dust we must return: And blessed be GOD in lovely JESUS, that I am now enabled by Faith, to look upon all sublunary Things, as Dung in Comparifion of the Excellency of Christ. O for Tongues of Angels, to extol him, never enough to be extolled, who out of meer Love did undertake for us poor frail Worms, who had ruined our selves on many Accounts, and notwithstanding thereof he extended the Bowels of Compassion towards us, and therein an eminent Manner, by releasing us of all our Sins, and nailing them to his Cross, and cloathing us with his Righteousness; that he might present us pure and spotless to the Father. What further shall I say of Sweet and Lovely CHRIST. All Thou do, is to multiply

Words without Knowledge ; for it is impossible any created Being can in the least comprehend that boundless Ocean of Love, which he bears to his Chosen. O ! for the Light of his reconciled Countenance to shine upon me ! O for his Favour, for Life lies in his Favour : All ye Hosts of Heaven, and Inhabitants of the Earth praise and exalt him, and magnifie the Greatness of the Riches of his free Grace and pardoning Mercy on my Behalf.

And now I bid Adieu to all earthly Comforts and Enjoyments, to this vain transitory World, the Stage of Sinning and Sorrow : And welcome Heaven and Eternal Enjoyment of GOD and the LAMB, which thro' Faith in his Blood, I (tho' the Chief of Sinners) hope to obtain : Oh ! that he would enable me to persevere in this Faith and Hope, and to carry with that Christian Bravery and Resolution that becomes, even to my latest Breath ; being fully perswaded, That Death in his most appalling and dreadful Form is made my Friend, thro' the Death of my LORD and Saviour Jesus Christ, into whose Hands I commit my Spirit.

Nicol Muschet.

EDINBURGH, Printed and sold by JOHN REID in Pearson's Clofs,
a little above the Cross.

CARMEN ACROSTICUM

IN

Nicolaum Musbet

Ab Amico quodam conscriptum.

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Nemo mihi insultet, quamvis mea Crimina dira
In Caput hac merito Probra tulere meum :
Christus enim, Vita mihi, nunc in Fine supremo,
Ostendit Misero, quid suus esset Amor.
Laus Aeterna Dei Nato, qui a Morte redemit
Aeterna hanc Animam ; Hac peritura Die
Usque in secla fait ; Nisi me bonus ille Redemptor
Submersum propra sustinisset Ope.
Mens igitur Christum Dominum celebrabit ob illud ;
Ut Terra, et Caelum, concinat atque Mare
Sanctorum O ! pro Turba Virum reddatis honorem
Haic Domino, mihi qui spesque salusque fuit.
Efferte O Superi venerandum Nomen JESU,
Terram sidereus dum tegit Axe Polus.

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